GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1355
ANSWERED ON:22.08.2007
STUDY ON MPLAD SCHEME
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Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission had recently undertook the study of MPLAD Scheme to evaluate its design, implementation and impact;

(b) if so, details of its outcome; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to identify the areas of its weakness and strength for the improvement in the performance of the MPLAD Scheme?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN)

(a) : Planning Commission has recently not undertaken the study on MPLAD Scheme to evaluate its design, implementation and impact. However, in November, 2001 the Programme Evaluation Organization of Planning Commission released an evaluation report on MPLAD Scheme.

(b): The main findings of the scheme were:

Out of 25702 works in 57 sample constituencies during 1993-99 those classified under Roads and Bridges and Community Works dominated constituting about 29 and 24 per cent respectively. Of the total Works, about 68 % were reported to be complete, 14 % were in progress, 9 % were yet to start and the status of rest of works (9 %) could not be known.

Allocation of funds to most of the Works in the selected districts was found to be meager despite the fact that there was a large unspent balance (46%) of MPLADS amount. At the aggregate level, about 46.4 % of the works got an allocation of less than Rs. 50,000, while the works with an allocation of Rs. 5 lakh or more constituted only 3.6 %.

Monitoring and supervision was found to be the weakest part of the scheme, which was largely due to inadequate infrastructure available to the Collector vested with the responsibility. Maintenance of the assets created was another area of weakness of the scheme. That was largely due to the lack of resources allocated specially for this.

The impact of the scheme as felt by the knowledgeable persons and local people indicated that about 65% of the created assets had been rated as good and overwhelming majority of them opined that the created assets were as per the felt needs and had improved their quality of life. However, their opinion about the implementation and maintenance of assets pointed out to the inadequate arrangements and a need for large scale involvement of PRIs for strengthening the scheme.

These findings were based on the data and information collected for the reference period 1994-95 to 1998-99 through a sample survey from structured schedules of 22 State Nodal Departments, 92 Lok Sabha MPs, 25 Rajya Sabha MPs, 103 District Collectors, 590 Development functionaries, 590 village / urban knowledgeable persons and 2892 local people. The primary data were supplemented by secondary data from published and unpublished records of government departments and extensive discussion with various respondents and personal visits to a number of work sites by evaluation team members.

(c): The follow up steps taken by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation for the improvement in the performance of the MPLAD Scheme are as follows:

@ In order to bring financial discipline, greater transparency and increased accountability, the MPLADS Guidelines have been comprehensively revised in November, 2005 taking into account the suggestions given by the Hon'ble Members of Parliament, recommendations of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Committees on MPLAD Scheme, observations of the Comptroller and Auditor General in its two reports, report of the Programme Evaluation Organization, Planning Commission and operational experience over a decade. The revised Guidelines have been issued in November, 2005.

@ To bring in more financial accountability and proper utilization of funds, the release of MPLADS fund has been streamlined as per Guidelines and funds release is linked to furnishing of Monthly Progress Reports, Utilization Certificates and Audit Certificates.

@ For effective and speedy implementation of the Scheme, greater responsibilities have now been assigned to State / UT

Governments and district authorities as per Guidelines which inter-alia stipulates that for effective supervision of MPLADS, a Committee under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary will be constituted for review of MPLADS implementation progress with the district authorities and MPs at least once in a year.

@ The progress of the Scheme is also periodically reviewed by the Hon'ble MOS (S&PI) and other senior officers of the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation both at Centre and State / UT level.

@ The Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation has initiated a mechanism for physical monitoring of works under the Scheme. NABARD Consultancy Services (NABCONS), a subsidiary of NABARD has been assigned the work of physical monitoring of MPLADS works on sample basis in 30 selected districts.